

30 JUL 1972

"Sign on the dotted line, Mr. Trotsky."

In December of 1933, Leon Trotsky signed a contract with Doubleday (then Doubleday Doran), authorizing the company to publish an English edition of his biography of Lenin. Max Eastman was engaged to do the translation. Trotsky, Lenin's chief lieutenant during the Russian Revolution, had finished only the first volume of his project, and Eastman had finished translating twelve of its fifteen chapters when all copies of both Russian and English manuscripts disappeared. Since there had been raids and rumors of raids on Trotsky's files during that time, Eastman ascribed the disappearance to Stalinist agents and abandoned the project.

Many years later, Eastman mentioned the Lenin biography during a television interview. As a result, he got a phone call informing him that his unfinished translation was in the Houghton Library at Harvard. Mysteriously enough, the Library had no record of how it had acquired it.

By that time, Eastman had forgotten about the Doubleday contract. He asked his literary agent to find a publisher for the long-lost work. She sent it to Doubleday. At that point, our filing system rose to the occasion and yielded the original contract. Sadly, Eastman died in 1969, while translating the last three chapters. The work was completed and annotated by Maurice Friedberg.

The climax of this forty-year publishing story is a fascinating book. **THE YOUNG LENIN** portrays Lenin as a bright, impulsive, energetic youth, much influenced by the execution of his older brother for taking part in an assassination attempt. In tracing Lenin's development, Trotsky also gives us a memorable portrait of late 19th century Russia, capturing the mood of a nation hurtling toward political upheaval.

In its own way, **THE YOUNG LENIN** is as extraordinary an event in 1972 as would be a just-discovered biography of George Washington written by Thomas Jefferson. It will take its place as one of the key documents in understanding the men and events that led to the history-changing Revolution of 1917.

THE YOUNG LENIN by Leon Trotsky

Translation and Introduction by
Max Eastman

at all booksellers

DOUBLEDAY

